



Beast Mode:

Preparing Your Cadet Candidate for Basic Training

NOTE TO PARENTS: Join the West Point Class of 2030 Parents page on Facebook. Moms, join West Point Moms page on Facebook. Get phone numbers and email addresses. You'll make great local connections through the [West Point Parents Club of Georgia](#).

SHOES

- Make sure to really break in the low quarter shoes to reduce the number of blisters.
- Low quarters: Lots of cadets like Bates. [Sentry High Shine Oxford - Tactical | Wolverine Footwear](#) or Bootmakers: buy through exchange at West Point. Call to order quickly. They do sell out.
- Boots: For Beast: Highly suggested [Belville boots](#) or [Garmont boots](#) ; both are cushioned and better for rucking; Boots for the School Year: [Oakley Boots](#); less cushioning and light weight.

SOCKS

- Issued dress socks are bad, buy [dress](#) socks
- Issued boot socks are ok, scratchy and not cushioned, River Fox socks (expensive) are great, but they can get lost in the laundry, buy black not green to also wear with low quarters

UNDERWEAR

- Underwear: NO ONE uses the issued tighty whities for guys. They use them to polish their low quarters. Buy at least 15 pairs, no cotton only quick dry. Buy black but don't worry about logos.

PACKING

- Personal cell phone and charger, bring in a Ziploc bag.
- 60 second transfer of personal items on R-Day, put EVERYTHING in jumbo Ziploc bags.
- Good luggage options: L.L. Bean duffle bag, or [osprey backpack](#).

HYGEINE

- Laundry: done by the cadre so may not happen often. Every platoon is different. Some don't allow sink wash. In the field, there is no washing at all. You don't need to bring sink soap.
- Bring 3 bars of soap, no time to shop depending on cadre.
- Razors: disposable head razors are good, 4 or 5 heads for beast
- Case for toothbrushes, and full tube of toothpaste
- Bug repellent: Super important, buy an extreme repellent, cadet will spray it all over body and equipment, small bottle or it must fit in ruck.

- Foot Power: issued is fine, no need for more
- Band-Aids: Bring regular size box, [gel bandaids](#)
- Moleskin: One package is not enough; 1st three weeks are terrible on feet with the low quarters.
- Baby wipes: Bring 2 packs, must fit in ruck, can buy at store if they are allowed to go
- *For Females*: take at least a 2-week supply of their personal preferences for their feminine needs, baby wipes in excess, aerosol deodorant that can be sprayed on clothing and used as perfume, tweezers, and eyelash curler

OTHER ITEMS

- Watch: make sure it has a new battery, needs to be able to set alarms, digital is better
- Multitool: Go with Leatherman or Swiss multitool. There are good ones at the PX - don't go cheap on this item, all the gadgets need to work properly and thoroughly. Will need to check on plane.
- Lighter: Buy the old-fashioned Bic lighter when you get to Highland Falls, not allowed on airplanes
- Shoeshine kit: must have it
- Headlamp: Issued only, don't buy one
- Duct Tape: 1 roll of dark green and space-saving trick is to wind it onto a plastic card like a hotel room key. It takes up much less space. Consider two cards, each with about 15' of tape.
- Notebook: Issued one is fine, could buy small one for extra, must fit in camelback.
- Pens: Bring extra, cadet must have a pen at all times, they lose them a lot
- Envelopes and stamps: Issued 6 stamps and envelopes. Include letter, blank or notebook paper. Cadets have time every night to write, but some really enjoy it and write more than you would expect. Put addresses in the notebook. **Consider signing up for Sandboxx – it's a paid subscription app that makes it easy to write letters and send photos on your phone. With every letter, the cadet gets a blank letter with postage paid to return
- Photos of family and friends: put in the notebook
- Rope: told to bring 10 feet but will need more. They must make a tent with it out in the field. One cadet said 20 ft would be plenty. Dark color.
- I sent my son with 50' of paracord wrapped in a donut. It was more than enough, and he was able to share with his squad mates.
- Clip-on fan: Can be hard to fit in bags, but helpful
- Mosquito netting: head covering to enable better sleep in the field
- 1-2 large trash or leaf Bags (good for use as a dry bag inside the rucksack)

A FEW MORE THOUGHTS

- Alec Lee is a parent, West Point grad and Field Force Officer who put together a helpful online guide: [The Dad's Guide to West Point](#)
- This is also a helpful resource: [Mom's Survival Guide to West Point](#)
- Say your goodbyes the night before, R-day is crazy, and check-in goes by fast.
- Bring letters in envelopes addressed to cadet, the post office has a table set up in Eisenhower Hall and puts a special stamp only used for R-Day. Send one home to yourself to save.
- Retail therapy is real after dropoff at Eisenhower Hall.
- Stay for the Parade in the afternoon. It's your last opportunity to get a glance at your CC before you leave. But don't be sad if you can't spot your cadet in the crowd. With new haircuts, kids are hard

to find.

- Send pics in your letters for beast. CCs love pics of what is going on at home. Takes their minds off of what they are going through.
- CADET CANDIDATE's are tired and might not want to write home all the details, send these [form letters](#) with your letter and a self-address envelop to make it easy for them. You can cut and paste what you want.
- Join the [West Point Parents Club of Georgia](#) if you haven't done so already.

A-Day is only 7 weeks after R-Day. You will survive and so will your CC.